

Appendix I: Environmental Justice Across the Mystic (EJAM): Summit Results

The following is a summary of the issue areas discussed at the November 2003 EJAM Project Summit and the priority issues and potential actions suggested by participants.

Land Use and Transportation

Additional Issues:

- Regional equity and sustainability (incl. social equity, environmental health & economics)
- Regional planning – need better metrics
- Transit-oriented development
- Mixed waterfront use – incl. transportation
- Better bike/pedestrian access
- Municipal infrastructure
- Agricultural use
- Air pollution – impact on public health
- Outreach to immigrant communities

Priority Issues for Action Planning:

- Understanding the linkages: land use/transportation/public health/water quality
- Networking systems
- Preserving natural spaces

Potential Actions:

- Role of regional organizations (MAPC, MyRWA, Boston MPO) (MPO not responsive to EJ issues – need systemic change, increase community representation)
- Have state EJ policy apply to non-EOEA agencies – e.g., transportation and housing agencies
- People in communities should have a say about how agencies work with the communities.
- Standardize and improve the 37 land-use categories – include square footages, impervious surface
- Identify, correlate and improve data sets: e.g., need data on vehicle miles traveled
- Help citizens use the data
- Broaden MEPA review – consider regional impacts, use more metrics (vehicle miles added, total jobs added, total household units)
- Training of municipal officials and community members
- Balancing of quantitative and qualitative data – case studies needed
- Funding for community groups and municipalities for technical assistance
- Promulgate regulations to implement EJ policy
- More accountability on projects – clear explanation of EJ outreach on all projects, how implemented and audited
- Review criteria for transportation system expansion.

Water Quality

Issues:

- Understanding pollution sources – cause and effect
- CSOs
- Salt pile
- Boating as a pollution source
- Trash, illegal dumping
- Oil tanks on Chelsea Creek (recent oil spill)
- Used oil disposal
- Catch basins, sewage and storm drains
- Illegal connections
- Animal waste – dogs
- Landfill in Woburn
- Island End coal tar plant
- Too much asphalt

Priority Issues for Action Planning:

- Characterizing pollution levels
- Identifying pollution sources
- Making monitoring information available to the public
- Educating towns/decision makers about what has to happen to improve
- Addressing CSOs
- Shared expertise

Potential Actions:

Pollution and Pollution Sources:

- Measure pollution – coordination needed to measure all types
- Use community observations – e.g., Riverkeepers in NYC
- Continued and expanded water quality monitoring
- Identify an organization to play a communications role

CSOs:

- Different parts of watershed have different polluters and levels of pollution
- Focus advocacy on CSOs to get federal, state and local government action
- Work on low-impact development
- Stormdrain stenciling.

Highest Priorities:

- Continued & expanded monitoring
- Advocacy for government action on CSOs: lobbying, op eds, publicity around the Mystic River movie

Exposures and Public Health

Additional Issues:

- Ingesting pollutants
- Baseline public health data – what *are* the health problems?
- Open space and recreational opportunities
- Noise
- Access to health care
- Non-point source pollution

Priority Issues for Action Planning:

- How to figure out what's important?
- Communication – synchronizing the information that exists, and simplifying so that community can use

Potential Actions:

Defining Priorities:

- Public health NGO/clearinghouse
- Community mapping – overlay health + pollutants + EJ; discover gaps & set priorities
- Pilot program with Fed \$\$
- Outreach to empower people, communities
- Health center survey – survey public health infrastructure & organizations
- Exposure & emissions research
- Small grant-based local actions & participation => awareness & engagement (mini-RFPs)
- Door-to-door concurrent survey & engagement
- Use what we already know (e.g., EMAPCT, Faber)

Communication:

- Distribute literature door-to-door
- Web-site links
- Communicate on 2 levels – technical and lay person (churches, city centers, day care, cable TV)
- Political base